



The Facts about Breast Screening

- **Breast Screening Saves Lives!** Between 1989 and 2005, Breast Cancer mortality rates in Ontario women aged 50 - 69 decreased by 35%. This decrease is credited to both improved cancer treatments and increased participation in breast screening.
- **Regular breast screening can find cancers early when they are small and less likely to have spread.** Three quarters of women diagnosed with breast cancer at the OBSP have cancers that have not spread to the lymph nodes.
- **Mammography** is the gold standard in breast screening. It is still the most effective tool for detecting breast cancer early in most women. Many studies have shown that regular mammograms for women aged 50-69 reduce deaths from breast cancer by up to one third.
- Breast cancer is the most common cancer in Ontario women. It is anticipated in 2009 that 8,700 Ontario women will be diagnosed with breast cancer and 2,100 will die from it.
- Eight out of ten breast cancers are found in women age 50 and over and 50% of breast cancers occur in women age 50-69.
- The OBSP makes screening easily accessible. Women 50 years and older with or without a family physician can be screened through the OBSP. Women can book their own appointments and are reminded by letter when they are due for their next appointment screen. **In Northwestern Ontario, the OBSP contact number is 1-800-461-7031.**
- Breast health – what can women do?
 - The most important thing women between 50 and 69 can do is go for regular mammograms.
 - All women need to be breast aware – know how their breasts look and feel and report any changes to their healthcare provider.
 - Take steps to reduce their risk of breast cancer:
 - Maintain a healthy body weight, especially after menopause.
 - Be physically active.
 - Have no more than one alcoholic drink per day, if at all.
 - Be a non-smoker and avoid second-hand smoke.

